

# SQUEEZING THROUGH!



SHANGHAI SKETCHES  
1941 — 1945

BY PAULA ESKELUND & SCHIFF



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## FOREWORD.

Some day, very soon, Shanghai will have returned to its normal life. Chinese passing the Hongkong & Shanghai Bank will again pat the bronze lions, the World's longest bar will hospitably open its doors, and gradually memories of the last 3 1/2 years will fade as a nightmare, better forgotten. But there were a few glimpses of light in the darkness of those dreary black - out years. There were smiles behind tears and suffering. This little book is an attempt in all modesty to set down in words and pictures an account of what good and evil was characteristic of daily life in Shanghai during the war years 1941-1945.



**TIMES CLASSIFIEDS** are  
the **SMALL ADS**  
That Bring **BIG RESULTS**

**EDUCATIONAL**

**Y**OUNG lady speaking excellent English, offers interesting and attractive method of learning Russian.

**PERSONAL**

**T**ALL young lady, desirous of keeping up with fashions, would appreciate gift of second-hand trousers - good material, box . . . . (13. 2. 42)

**W**HO will offer a good home with garden to Scotch terrier? male. State Nationality . . . .

**L**ADIES, whose husbands are celebrating "Basle Night", are looking for male company, tonight. Obligers Phone . . . . .

**T**WO business girls (Russians) would like to meet two good-sport boys for Easter Holidays.

**B**ROADMINDED: highly independent young lady, fed up with rations, tram conductors and high cost of living, wishes to brighten up existence by corresponding with congenial, nice-looking and/or financially sound gentleman, box . . . . .

**F**ROM a Shanghai Rainbarrel to a Californian heartbreaker "I love you much too much". Let me know how you feel about me. Listen nightly requests.

**W**ALTER DARLING: . . . Don't-listen to scandalmonger . . . . Molly.

**S**MOKY darling: never let you down. Yours forever. God keep you happy for me . . . .

**E**RIC: children have chicken-pox, hope you are well. Ruth and I miss you.

**W**OULD lady pianist, gay and romantic help to guide the vocal development of a young Chinese gentleman, view companionship. Apply with full particulars of her family and education to Box . . . .

**M**Y Darling Green Eyes: Miss you terribly, but don't worry. Longing to hear from you and see you again. Loving you always "Moosa".

**X**MHA: Request: Will you please play from Mama-foofoo to Papafoofoo: "I cant give you anything but love!"



What we lost...

AMERICA  
BRITAIN  
CHUNGKING  
DUTCH  
EXTRALITY  
FADI  
GIN-BITTERS  
HEATING  
IMPERIALISM  
JEWS  
KITH AND KIN  
LIFTS  
MOTORCARS  
NYLON-STOCKINGS  
OPIUM  
PEACE  
QUALITY  
REASON  
SHORT WAVES  
TOURISTS  
URBANITY  
VITAMINS  
WHOOPEE  
YES'SIR



what we got instead!

AXIS  
BRIDGEHOUSE  
CRB  
DUGOUTS  
EMBEZZLEMENTS  
FILTH  
GENDARMERIE  
HAT-SNATCHERS  
IMPERIALISME  
JAPANESE  
KEY MONEY  
LOOTING  
MISERY  
NEW ORDER  
OPIUM  
PAO CHIA  
QUEEVES  
RED ARMBANDS  
SQUEEZE  
TAXES  
UPSTARTS  
VODKA  
WAR  
"YES" MEN



# THE LITTLE DAILY DOSE!



A LITTLE STOVE TO COOK THE RICE,  
A LITTLE CAT TO CATCH THE MICE!



AN OIL LAMP



FOR THE BLACK-OUT NIGHT,

A PAIR OF BOOTS - BIG,  
SHINING BRIGHT,





HEI HO! HEI HO! HOT WATER MAN  
FOR MISSIE'S BATH (JUST NOW & THEN) -



THREE BOTTLES FOR  
THE BEASTLY COLD -

AND PLENTY LITTLE BARS OF GOLD!



# Crooks & Crimes

... one realises the tremendous influence the outbreak of the War of Greater East Asia has wielded to make Shanghai a Queen among towns ... The Shanghai Times, 8. 12. 1942

(The following headlines are lifted from the columns of that same paper without anybodys kind permission, for which we duly apologize.)

CHINESE TRIED FOR MURDER BID IN RICE QUEUE

\* \* \*

CEMETERY'S PEACE DISTURBED IN EARLY MORNING BY THEFT

\* \* \*

5 HONEST TRAM CONDUCTORS OUT OF 1661 FOUND

\* \* \*

POLICE UNCOVER LARGE-SCALE GAMBLING DEN IN RUSSIAN CLUB

\* \* \*

YOUTH KILLS CLASSMATE IN REVENGE

\* \* \*

CHINESE GIRL MURDERED ON SUN CO. ROOF

\* \* \*

CHINESE MONK CHARGED WITH IMMORALITY IN COURT

\* \* \*



ALUMINIUM THEFT BELIEVED MOTIVE IN SIKH MURDERS

\* \* \*

WOMAN TRIED FOR ASSAULT ON HUSBAND

\* \* \*

BANDITS USE DAGGERS IN STREET FIGHT

\* \* \*

FATHER TRADES DAUGHTER FOR A BAG OF RICE

\* \* \*

SPEEDY ACTION URGED TO CRUSH RAILWAY EXTORTION GANG

\* \* \*

EX-GOVNT. OFFICIALS SHOT TO DEATH FOR PROFITEERING

\* \* \*

4 GUNMEN ROB WIVES OF TWO SMP OFFICERS

\* \* \*

OVER HALF MILLION STOLEN IN CASH, JEWELLERY IN 2 WEEKS

\* \* \*

3739 PERSONS CONVICTED FOR CRIMES IN JANUARY (1943)

\* \* \*

and so on, and so on . . . . .





## OUR CURRENCY!



Apart from elements given to violent and vulgar crimes, Shanghai also boasts more gentle and refined trespassers of law and order. Nowhere, I believe, has the black market developed to such an extent as in wartime Shanghai. It is everywhere, everybody is connected with it, if not as a seller, of necessity as a buyer. As soon as an article is rationed, there is an additional scope to the black market. If you want to see it's headquarters, just walk around the Arcade and you will meet the tycoons of soaring living-costs. Again and again they were rounded up and dealt with more or less severely by the

authorities - especially less. Next day they were there again. What did a confiscation of some millions matter to them? It was the consumer who was the sucker. In the Exchange - shops millions were



chicken - food, fortunes were made, lost, and new fortunes were made. That the whole business was illegal was a matter of negligence. The Gold Dollar led the wild dance, gold bars clanged on counters, changing hands to the benefit of the HONEST dealer.





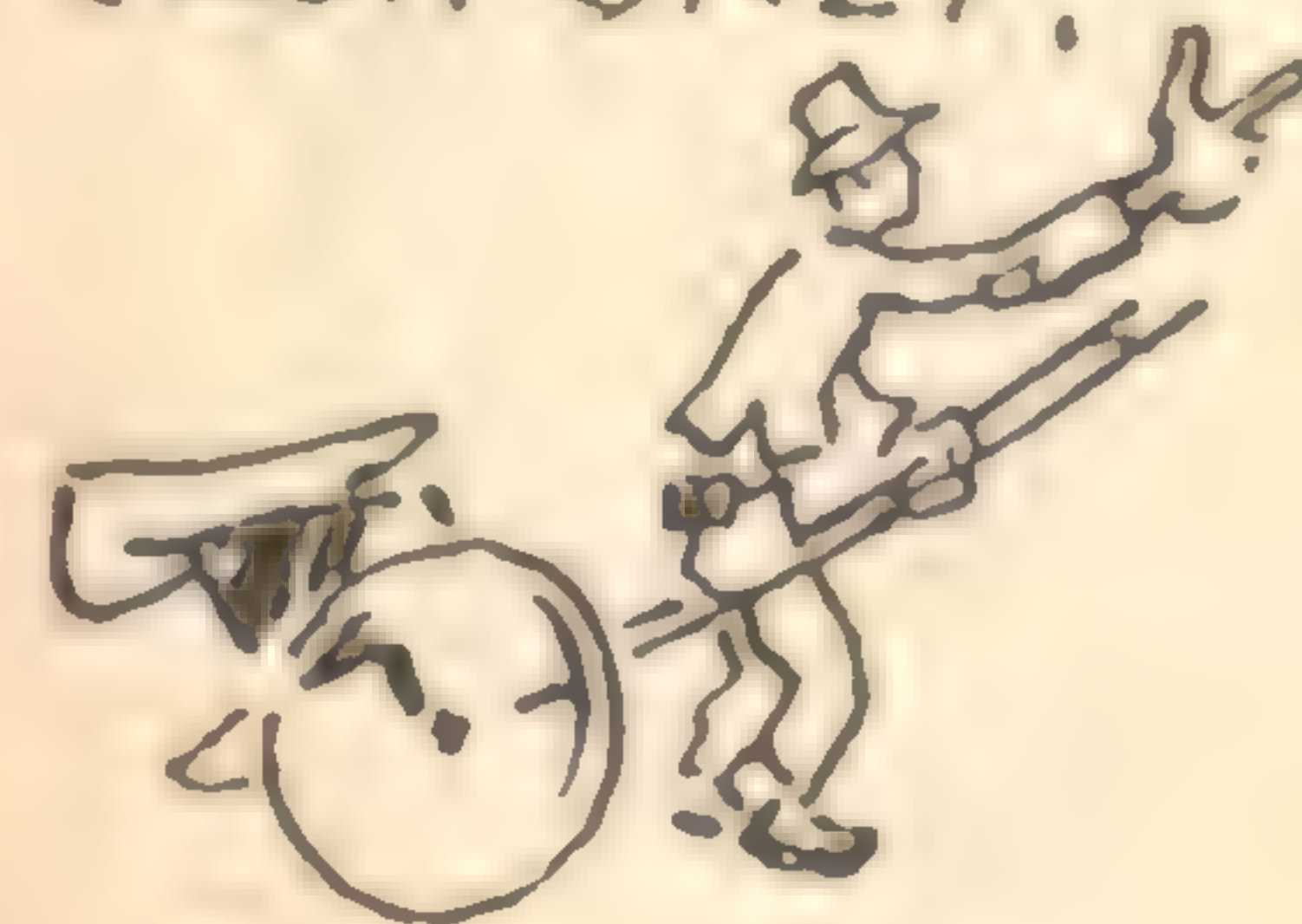
RACKETS were flourishing as never before. You want to rent an apartment? Certainly, my Dear Sir, but "KEY - MONEY" on the table. At the culmination of this racket a fairly big flat cost 25 gold bars in key money and small, dismal rooms with practically no accommodations were sublet for outrageous sums in addition to the initial key-money. As it was an illegal business it went under various names: "Furniture, fixtures to be taken over". And you paid your gold bars for three old, rickety chairs and a crooked lampshade. Of course Military Necessity was a good partner to the key-money racketeers. Well - you could take it or leave it. Most people took it.

For a short period Shanghai suffered under a most unusual racket: The CASH racket. If you could not produce cash, a cheque will do, but plus 25% to 40%! It was

**CASH ONLY!**

bad for everybody, but a windfall for shops, brokers and bank-clerks.

More amusing was the tram-ticket racket. If you handed the conductor a big note, he was very sorry, but he had no change. With



the prevailing rush on trams and buses conductors made quite a bit

on this trick and they eked out their income by stationing colleagues at the tram-stops, who politely asked for your ticket. Why only use a ticket once? Suckers: Tram-company and tram-riders.



Or the newspaper delivery boys. They got the ingenious idea of not delivering your daily paper. Just like that! After a few days a neatly mimeographed chat was pushed under your door, signed: yours faithfully, the delivery boys. It informed "Dear Sir and Madam" in urbane terms that high living costs had led them to the bad conduct of squeezing a few papers and suggested the special favour of cumshaw, for which separate receipt would be given. Shanghai smiled and paid.

Toward the end of 1944 a change set in on the local crime front, and official circles attributed this to the fact that "unlawful elements are giving up armed robberies and professional assassinations for the more lucrative occupation of profiteering." (*Shanghai Times*, 23. 12. 1944) No more furcoat snatching, hold-ups for a lady's pants or her bag, bicycles were fairly safe, rubber tyres were hardly worth robbing . . . . Shanghai got profiteering-minded, and HOW !!



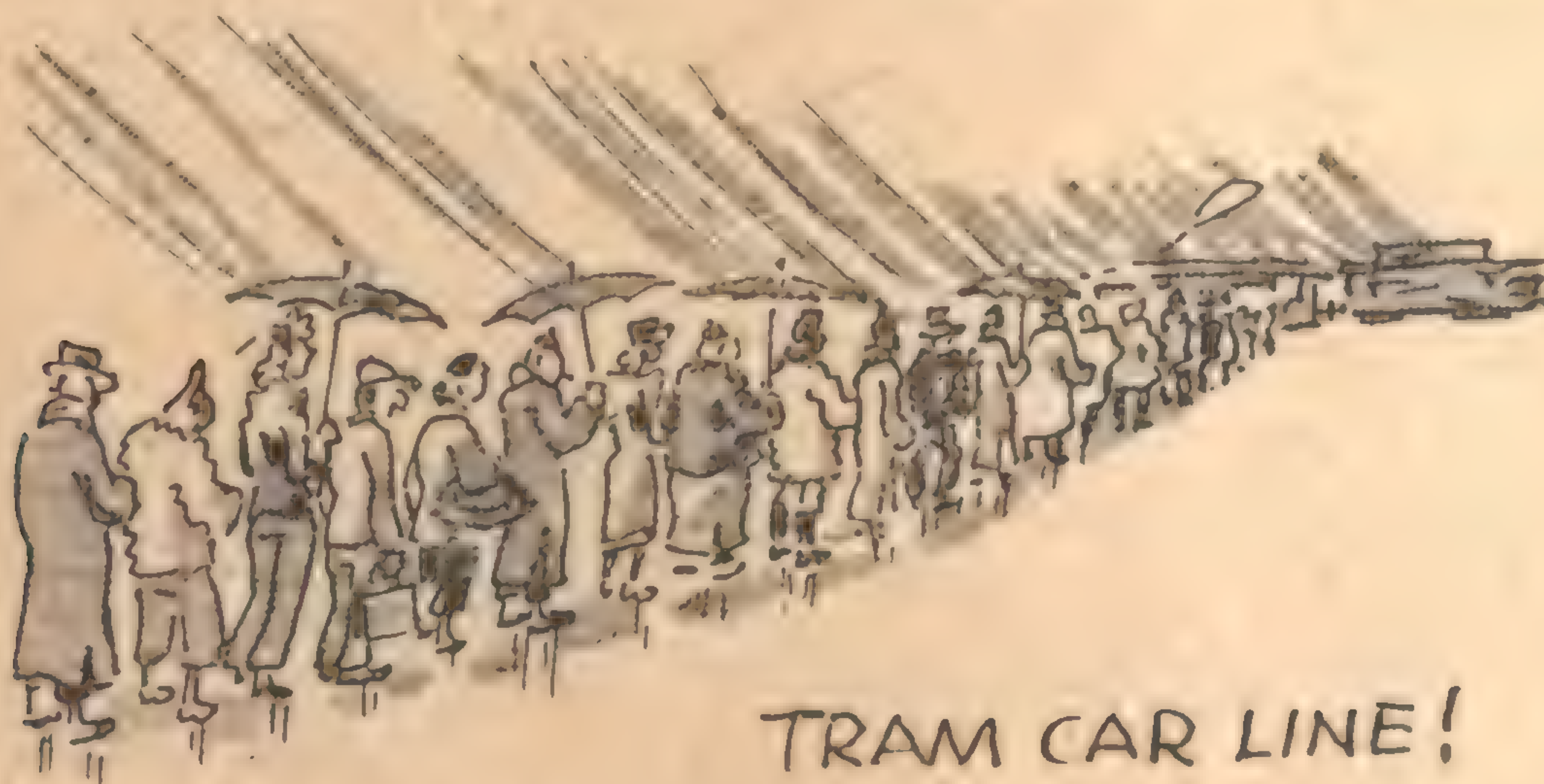


QUEUE UP, SHANGHAILANDER!

for

BICYCLE LICENSE, BREAD, BUS, CIGARETTES, CRB EXCHANGE FOR FAPI, CAMP  
REGISTRATION, COAL BALLS, COTTON, FLOUR, LIFTS, MATCHES, OIL, PASSES, PERMITS  
OF ALL KIND, RADIO COLLECTION, RAILWAY TICKETS, RATION TICKETS, RESIDENCE  
CERTIFICATES, REPATRIATION, RICE, SALT, SOAP, SUGAR, TRAMS, VACCINATION . . . .

and SURRENDER OF ARMS!



TRAM CAR LINE!



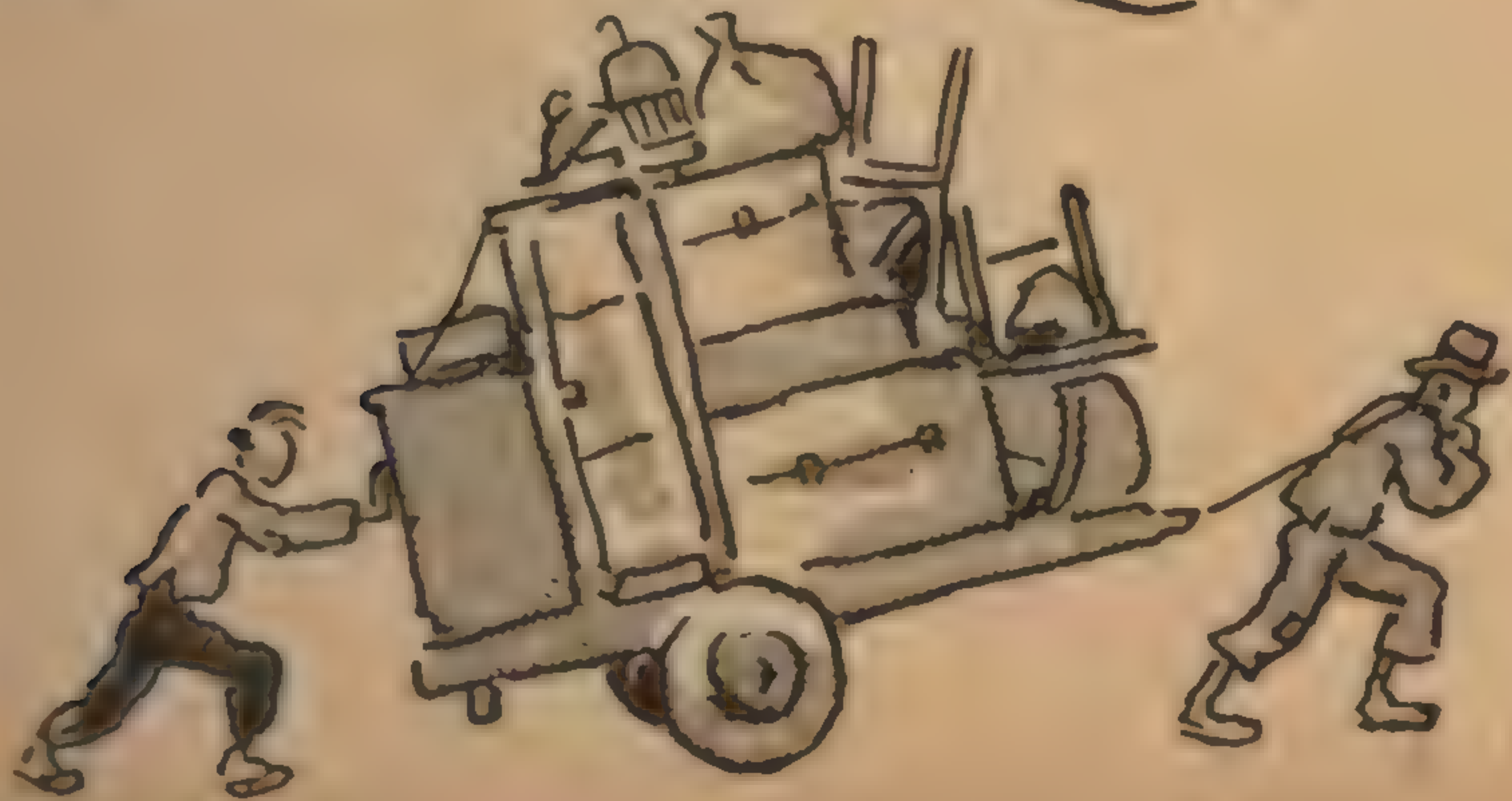
BLACK OUT!













# BIG SHOT & SMALL POTATO

"HE!! PASS!!"



**Brhrhrhrh! Brhrhrhrhrh!**

People begin to run . . . . .

Barricades are being put up and  
busy Pao Chias rope off the town  
at 50 meters intervals.

In no time 5 to 6 million people are immobilised. No can walkee! Angry and annoyed you are on the spot for minutes, hours. It is a crashing bore! It does not improve matters or your mood, if rain or biting winds slash you. Until "BRHRH" goes again even a Big Shot is a worm, baby Pao Chia is, God Almighty . . . . . and cars are indiscriminately allowed to pass!









"I FEEL I KNOW YOU QUITE INTIMATELY ALREADY, ERIC!"



# KÜSS DIE HAND, GNÄDIGE FRAU!



On May 8, 1943 about 20,000 Central European Jews were segregated in Hongkew in two square kilometers. So the clever "Jude - men" - as the Chinese call them - created a miniature European city among ruins and actually made it a kind of tourist attraction. In Hongkew you can buy and sell everything. Precious crystals and silverware from the old country are neatly arranged in diminutive windows. Cafes and restaurants serve first - class coffee and cakes. You settle and read your newspaper. Everybody knows everybody. The shabbiest Hongkewite is "Herr Professor" or "Herr Doktor"! Want to see the "Merry Widow"? She is there. Or listen to Austrian songs? They sing them

every Sunday in "The White Horse". The emigrants look sad but they have a sense of humour, and rumours are a good spice to their daily ration of misery. In fact, they say that there exists a stock-exchange, where you can exchange one new rumour against two old ones. The emigrant's life is a hard one. He must, somehow, squeeze through and his methods are not always popular. But if you look behind the surface you meet worries, poverty, misery. However, the "Jude - man" belongs to a strong race. Through centuries his system has developed anti-toxins to hardships. He wants to survive. And he did.



# STATELESS REFUGEE AFFAIRS

"PLEASE SIR - I WANT  
E PASS!"



"AH - YOU SELL  
GOLD DOLLAR?"





"NO NO SIR -  
I AM TEACHER" "YOU SELL GOLD -  
DOLLAR!!!"





"NO SIR - I AM  
TEACHER!"

"YOU SELL  
GOLDDOLLAR!!"





"OK - I GIVE YOU  
PASS. HOW MUCH IS  
GOLDDOLLAR TODAY?"



"YOU WANT TO BUY - SIR -  
OR YOU WANT TO SELL?"









THE GOOD RICE OF THE GOOD EARTH is never quite sufficient for China's teeming millions, and then there are wars, droughts, floods, co-prosperity etc. etc.



"POLICE DUTIES"

### RICE QUEUES IN SHANGHAI.

Before sunrise they were there, silent in the darkness. Maggots ever growing, feeding, worming their way around blocks, between barbed wire, heading for the shop, labelled: Dealers in all kind of rice, flour, horse and cattlefeed." On each blueclad shoulder a number clearly marked with chalk. And dont you try to cheat! The policeman is as light-footed as his stick is heavy, and you start again at the wrong end of the queue. In spite of burning sun or freezing mud the queue is alive. Women are knitting or feeding their babies,



students study anxiously, and a gambler moves his small table and dice-cup following the slow movement. A beggar lies dead on the pavement. The queue passes him by. Somebody quietly goes to sleep, head on the shoulder in front of him. And the queue moves on.

Body is pressed against body. So it became necessary to segregate the soles, trousers to one side, gowns to the other (guess which is which) - and still three babies were born and died in the queue.

The "police rice" was cheap but bad. Good rice was brought in from the country, carried on shoulders of men, women and children. An endless stream passing greedy Japanese soldiers and policemen. Once the Japanese prohibited this traffic, and the price went up. Many Chinese lost their heads, but Japan gave up before the smugglers. SMC got worried. The ever-rising prices caused riots. Shanghai was starving. Then they found a dictator, a Neutral and an honest man. He did away with queues, brought order and managed to feed 1,500,000 Chinese cheaply and quietly, until the Japanese took over, and rice-distribution became a promise on frontpages. Then the Black Market . . . . and all was well!







# MR. TURNABOUT



① HERR FRIEDRICH GEORG MEYER  
SECRETARY OF THE "MONARCHIST  
BUND" IN AUSTRIA / 1930



②  
MR. FREDERICK G.  
MEYER IN SHANGHAI  
1935



③ HERR FRIEDRICH MEYER  
WELL-KNOWN MEMBER OF  
THE GERMAN  
COMUNITY  
IN  
SHANGHAI  
1940



④ TOVARISH MEYER  
1945





# WINTER FASHIONS 1945





AND SUMMER FASHIONS

OR  
A "SHORT" STORY!





# CAMPS



Shanghai Times 29. 4. 42

. . . in the Bushido Code  
will be found Loyalty, Patriotism,  
Filial Piety, Mercy, Faith, Elegance,  
Frugality, Justice, Gentleness, Hones-  
ty, Sincerity, Purity and Courage.

TORAO KAWASAKI  
COMMANDANT OF SEVERAL  
C. A. CENTERS



6 o'clock: Up everybody, get dressed and light your  
chatties, clean the rooms, prepare breakfast.

8 o'clock: Roll call. Then get busy, chop firewood, sift  
coal, make coal - balls, do gardening, children  
to school, grown - ups cook and wash.

12.30 Tiffin,  
Afternoon is your own.

18.00 Roll call.

20 21 22 to bed, lights out. Good night everybody!

o'clock: \_\_\_\_\_

For over 900 dreary days and nights some 5 6000 "Red armband" - people did the same monotonous routine in Camps in and around Shanghai. Behind barbed wire, closely watched by Japanese guards, they marked time. But they did not despair. They never lost faith and they pulled through - most of them, anyway. The problems of daily life became of overpowering importance. Food especially. For those who did not get parcels from outside contacts, things were pretty tough. For even if a



big beetroot is delicious, it is hardly enough for tiffin, nor is a quarter pound potatoes, one onion and a few slices of lilyroot. Belts were then tightened, dresses changed on this diet "a la Hollywood" but without the charm of vitamins. One police officer, who volunteered as a cook, lost 46 pounds in one month. But never mind. When



parcels arrived, from the Red Cross, or from friends, forgotten was the creeping meat and the bread which was really not quite bad. In fact, says an inmate, it could even sometimes be eaten! And marmalade, coffee, kippers, American cigarettes, etc. were a thousand - fold appreciated by people who were learning what it is to be have - nots.

The camps had their own orchestras, and gramophones. Irrepresible youth enjoyed dancing and flirting on Saturday evenings. For the theatre - minded there were modern plays, Noel Coward, etc. Nor was



cultural life neglected. Books, lectures and discussions kept the grey matter alive. What about the lecture "Inside the Atom"? A gaping audience was held thrallbound, though little did they realise what part this midget was going to play in their lives, as in the lives of the whole world.

And do not think they were cut off from the outside world. If anything, they knew better than those outside. In one camp clever hands fitted up a short - wave receiver in a toy motorcar. For the benefit of another centre two young Russian boys were singsonging the news of the world, while dangling slowly along the fence. And then, of course, there was always the Shanghai Times! Life floated by. A few couples were married, babies were born and death took its evitable or inevitable toll.

Was it a miserable life? Hardly. Only their prison was more limited than that of the European emigrants in Hongkew, or than Shanghai as a whole. And, of course, in addition there were the Japanese guards. At roll - calls you had better stand strictly at attention or you got a slap or two across your face, occasionally even a kick. One camp was considering to form a club of face - slapped internees, but gave it up. Not exclusive enough. But they gave the guards nicknames like Napoleon, Poison Ivy and Pale Face.

How to keep law and order? The Internees formed their own police force and sentenced miscreants to



various punishments. A Court of Equity could caution, caution severely, deprive of camp facilities or rations, and even report to the Home-government. More lenient was the verdict which ordered purloiner of camp-funds to get up at 6 o'clock and collect pebbles on a wheelbarrow two hours for several weeks. An occasional visitor to a Camp sometimes got a whiff of Vodka or Kauliang when interviewing a campee. How come? Across the fence, of course. The "over the fence" traffic, illegal and alluring, was immense. If found out, too bad. If not, goodie goodie. The call of the Outside was irresistible. Over the fence and you are a free man. Yes, but not for very long, and the rest of the camp had to suffer. But there were other ways and means. Surprising the number of cases that necessitated a stay in hospital or a visit to the dentist. Hearts were weak, functions went wrong: a hospital is indicated. There





they made up for their isolation. Visitors were received, stealthily passing sentries, and sisters, whose eyes did not see, and whose ears did not hear. Cosy picnics were arranged in bathrooms. Long separated lovers enjoyed their stolen happiness. Oh yes, even camp life and sickness had its compensations.

Weeks, months, and years sneaked by till one bright day a bomb fell - and that was the Atomic Bomb'

Yangtzepoo Camp, 12. 9, 1945

Commandant Hashimoto:

"Remember, there are one and a half million Japanese troops in Central China, who have never seen battle. Who stole my six bottles of beer? I came here to like you, to help you, but now I hate you . . . . WHO STOLE MY SIX BOTTLES OF BEER? I will give you till one o'clock, tomorrow to confess . . . . .



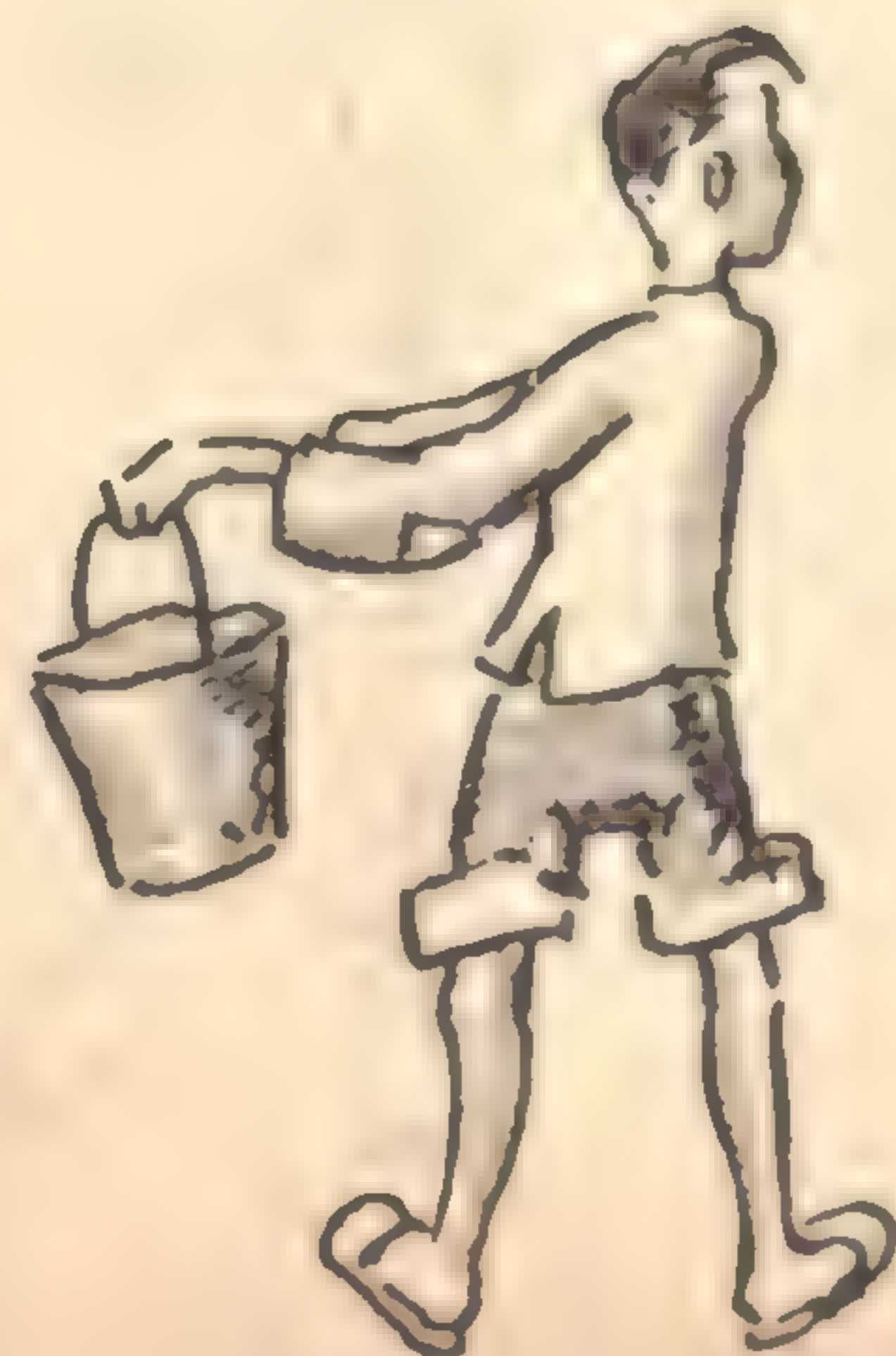
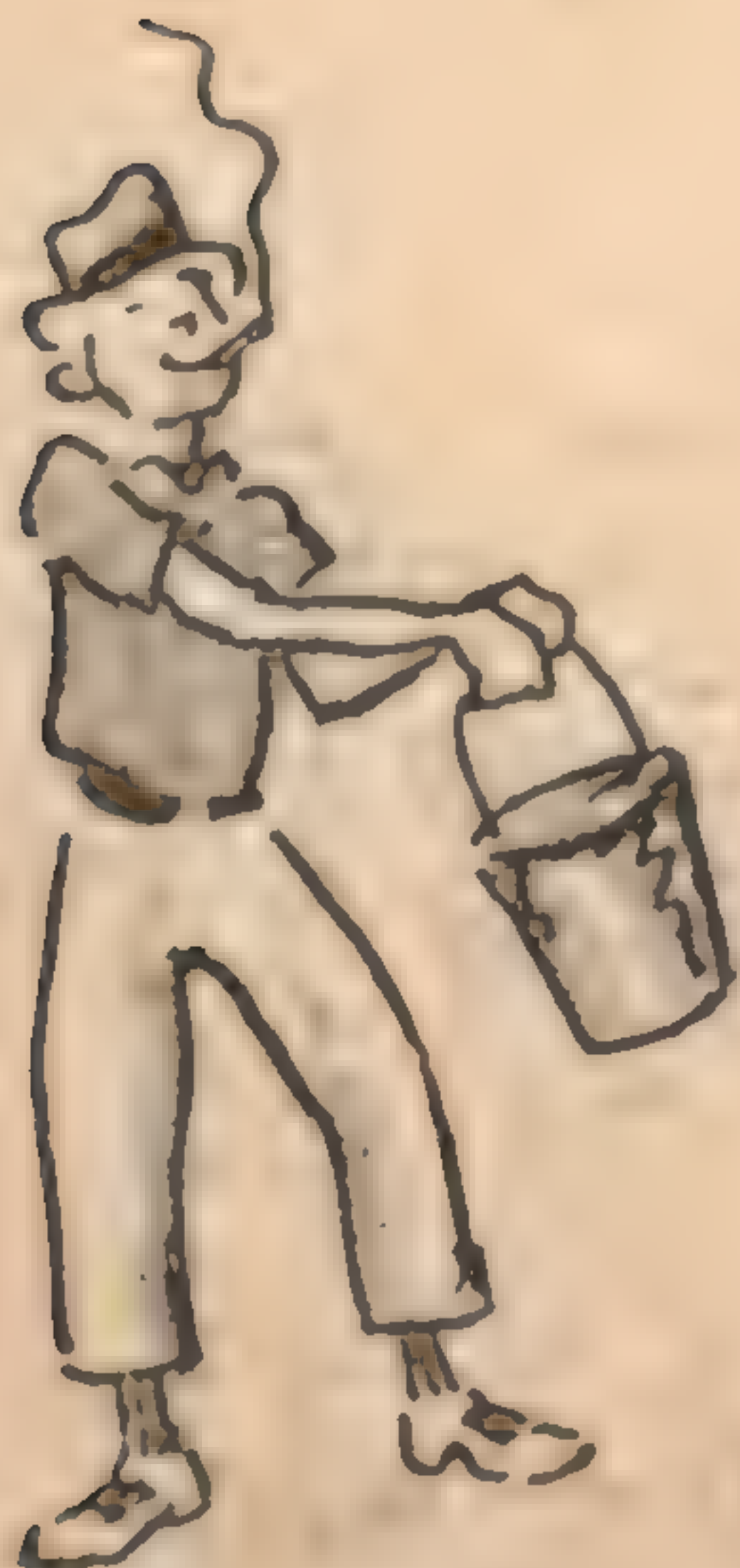
ONE MAN  
SHELTER



DRESSING STATION



ANTI AIR RAID





PRACTICE





# AIR RAID

PRECAUTIONARY  
ALARM

FULL  
ALARM





# SIGNALS



ALL CLEAR  
(JAPANESE PLANES  
APPEAR!)





# Peace breaks out!

THE BOY SAID!  
"MASTER - BEFORE-TIME  
HAVE  
COME  
BACK!"



--- at long, long last! Hurrah! God bless the United Nations.  
PEACE ON EARTH!

Telephones whirr all over Shanghai: is it true? Yes, this time it is true. Thank God! The town goes crazy, champagne corks are popping, everybody rejoices. On Avenue Joffre they dance till early morning, in Jewish Hongkew they dance on streets and in alleyways. Their two-fold misery is over. Blackout curtains are torn down and lights are on throughout the night. Flags go up, Red and Star, Stars & Stripes, Union Jack, Sickle & Hammer. The town is a jungle

"WELL - I AM AFRAID  
IT'S TRUE AT  
LAST!"



of flags. Every bicyclist and every pedicab - driver with a good United - Nations heart flies his banner, and so do perambulators.

SAID THE PROFITEER.



Four in one American - British - Chinese - Russian banners are waving from window and housetop. Camp gates fly open. Prison gates fly open, Pailus are built all over town. Chiang - kai chek is everywhere, in

martial posture and Generalissimo cloak. Nanking and the Japanese go out. Chungking goes in. Aeroplanes over Shanghai, the big silver birds that can spell disaster. Now they spell Peace. Americans are arriving, hotels are bustling with busy life and merriment.

Chungking troops in town, cheering crowds line up and hail their heroes. The harbour wakes up. When planes are circling overhead, steamers hoot, fire crackers greet the roaring engines and everybody runs to see the newcomers.

The Japanese have lost. They know it and they take it nicely. Their guards stand silent on their posts and co-operate in keeping order.



VICTORY PARADE



Around them is China Victorious, and only over the Japanese Embassy flutters "the Rising Sun".

Gradually the Japanese soldiers and civilians disappear from the street - picture, their shops are closed, they fade out, their Embassy banner goes down. They will go away: Japan for the Japanese! American boys, British boys, Shanghai girls, do your duty! They do. Every night club is full, life begins at sunset and never ends. Who cares about the curfew?

The War is won. May Peace be preserved! Two World Wars is enough in any century!

